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In "Through Deserts and Oases of Central Asia" the authors have extended their Persian field of travel to the Pamir and Chinese Turkestan. Chinese Turkestan is a curious mixture of Russian, Chinese, Hindu, and Moslem customs and religions, for it is not only a frontier region but through it runs the great ancient road from China to the Occident. The population of this vast plain, 1000 miles from east to west and half that distance from north to south, is estimated at 1,500,000, mostly confined to the oases that form only 1½ per cent of the entire area. Its two types, settled and nomadic (with a small semi-nomadic division), are administered separately by the Chinese government. Details of the history and geography of the land are given by Sir Percy Sykes in the second half of the book: the first half written by Miss Sykes is narrative.

Mr. Sowerby, joint-author with Robert S. Clark of "Through Shên-Kan" (Shensi-Kansu), has continued his explorations on the Sino-Mongolian frontier—that is the frontier as defined by the Great Wall, which to a great extent follows the natural boundary rather than the present political boundary. The work done was in the nature of scientific and geographical research, including the collection of biological specimens, the making of geological notes, the carrying out of compass traverses (unfortunately the exigencies of wartime publication prevented inclusion in the volume of the promised map), and general investigation into the lives, customs, and conditions of the natives. Regarding the last field the author, who was born in China and knows the people and their language, makes observations specially interesting at the present time. The Mongols he describes as a wretched remnant of a noble people degraded by a degenerate religion until they bear no resemblance to the tribes that under Jenghis Khan swept Asia and eastern Europe in a conquest that has never been equalled. Along the border the Chinese are steadily advancing, pushing further and further into Mongol territory. The several explorations are described in separate chapters, and there are also chapters on the biological work and on the flora and geology of the region.

The "Unknown China" of Mr. Pollard is the country he styles the home of the Yangtze Kiang, Nosuland, a semi-independent district of Szechwan bordering on Yunnan. The connection with the Government is chiefly the sending of tributes, one of which consists of the yearly despatch of forty-eight horses to Peking—at least the Nosus start them on the journey leaving it to the petty officials en route to decide whether they shall ever reach their destination. Among the aboriginals of China the Nosuland tribes are unique in that they possess a written language, ideographic like the Chinese but bearing no other resemblance to it. A completely organized feudal system is in vogue.

Mr. and Mrs. Andrews have written an account of the Asiatic Zoölogical Expedition of the American Museum of Natural History to China in 1916-1917. The destination of the expedition was the remote border province of Yunnan. The route was by way of Shanghai and Foo-chow with a brief stop-over in Fukien—an unsuccessful attempt to secure a specimen of the so-called "blue tiger." Ethnographically Yunnan is interesting as the seat of some thirty semi-independent non-Chinese tribes, some of whom represent the original inhabitants of China. It maintains a rather indifferent attitude towards the affairs of the government, with which it has little connection except through the media of tax collectors and other petty officials. The people are simple, kindly, hospitable, with a wealth of interesting folklore. The collection of 3,300 specimens and a large number of photographs and picture films is reported. The scientific results will be published by the Museum. From the present volume, which has the character of a popular narrative, details of scientific interest have been largely eliminated.

THE ECONOMIC GEOGRAPHY OF SIBERIA

RICHARD POHLE. *Sibirien als Wirtschaftsraum. Eine Einführung in das Leben Sibiriens.* viii and 66 pp.; map, bibliogr. Kurt Schroeder, Bonn and Leipzig, 1921. 9 x 6 inches.

Richard Pohle has to his credit a number of regional studies that are as thoughtful as they are brief and unpretentious. The essay under consideration is fortified at every turn by statistics and references to vital sources. At this time the Siberian realm is of special interest because the character of its development will depend largely upon the outcome, ultimate as well as immediate, of the Washington conference on the limitation of armaments and Far Eastern questions. Pohle regards Siberia as a house with two fronts: an eastern, which is still free for possession by the strong, and a western, which is irretrievably held by Moscow. The effect is to deny to West Siberia an outlet to the world-encircling and commercially life-

giving sea, an outlet that alone could give that region a distinctive culture and a modern industrial and social organization. It is still a *colony* of Europe and will long remain in that relation. It is the strength manifested by these restraining forces in the past that gives a sure clue to future development. Fighting against a close and distinctive organization of Siberian life are the great distances between Siberian centers of trade and life and between Siberia and the main life currents of the world. Too much space must be overcome. Too much space, economically useless at the present time, separates the areas of profitable production. The separatist tendencies of East Siberia are seen in the formation there of a republic two years ago. Midway between the eastern and western division of Siberia is a nodal area—the Lake Baikal region. An old trading mart, far removed from the seats of power, the life of Irkutsk and the region round about is freer from political considerations than that of the eastern or western marches. The Trans-Siberian railroad completed in 1905 has connected these dissimilar geographical elements, and it is indeed a very slender band of union.

Under these conditions the eastern border bids fair to become the scene of infiltration and possibly of possession by the yellow race, while the western border will long be traversed by eastward-moving cultural and political agencies. In the four-year period from 1907 to 1910, inclusive, Japanese fishing ships in Russian waters increased from 109 to 301, their tonnage from 11,675 to 49,307, and the number of fishermen from 1,174 to 7,332. In the same period the Russian fishing stations on the Okhotsk-Kamchatka coasts increased from 4 to 22 and the Japanese from 70 to 127. And four-fifths of the Russian catch goes to Japan. Japanese political control of Korea and southern Manchuria and the spirit of all her military and economic advances are in harmony with these figures.

Both the agricultural production and the agricultural potentialities of West Siberia are so great, and the capacity of the railroads is so small, that a short and cheap route to the sea and the world's markets has been a constant prepossession. But the Kara Sea, a great ice reservoir, is only navigable for two months, at the most, each year. In the period 1874–1905, 118 ships sought to make the passage via Kara Sea to Ob-Irtish outlets on the Arctic coast, and of these but 86 reached their destination. The Ob estuary is forbidding, for ice lingers in it so late that the river is free from ice but 146 days of the year at Obdorsk. The bar at the mouth has but three-fourths of a meter of water. Projects have been planned to construct railroads from the Ob to Barents Sea in order to avoid these difficulties.

The cotton and dried fruits of Turkestan are in contrast to the agricultural products of the temperate region farther north, and there thus exists in West Siberia a basis of exchange; but it is not nearly enough to make the region self-sufficient, so that West Siberia for both export and import must depend upon European Russia.

Set between the East and West is Middle Siberia, with a population scarcely greater than one-third that of West Siberia, whose products, namely, those of the Far East, particularly from China, find their way across West Siberia but do not stop there in any great quantity. Long continuous stretches of territory may be developed in West Siberia; in Middle and East Siberia there is a greater extent of upland and mountain, with deep and crooked valleys and greater remoteness and isolation in consequence, so that nuclei of settlement are scattered about in a non-continuous pattern.

Pohle has included in his paper a wealth of statistical material, recent and accurate, which furnishes the fundamental basis of his analysis of the life and relationships of the different parts of Siberia. He deals with the population increase of the different regions in late periods; and, though these periods are not always closely comparable owing to the unequal dates for which statistics are available, they yet furnish a reasonable basis for comparative growth and prosperity.

The northern border of the Siberian realm comes in for a certain amount of detailed treatment of high geographical interest. Whereas on the west of the Urals, between the Arctic coast and the Black Earth district, there are fourteen degrees of latitude, the belt between Cape Chelyuskin and the Black Earth district is twenty-four degrees wide. There appears to be a rather close correspondence between the trend of the coast and the southern border of the tundra. The map opposite page 1 shows this unmistakably until we reach the Stanovoy Mountains, where Arctic influences in the lee of the continent push the southern border of the tundra southward to the base of the Kamchatka Peninsula. The broad belt of the *taiga* reinforces the difficulties of distance from the sea and both *taiga* and tundra have only scattered settlements of natives or island-like settlements of gold diggers.

The author has something to say of the reindeer problem. He finds all parts of the tundra

accessible, and extensions of land supporting reindeer are found in the mountains south of the tundra belt in the midst of the *taiga*, where the forest cover is broken by uplifts that bear appropriate vegetation. Supplementing the reindeer is the chase, and wide spaces foster such activities. Goods such as bread, flour, tea, sugar, etc., which neither the forest nor the tundra can yield, are imported. Hunting and fishing are supplementary sources of food.

There are abundant statistics of production and area in the three chief sections of Siberia, and these complete the picture of the relations of man to his environment in this remote and widely extended land where the conditions of life are so uniform over broad stretches and where the frontier is not a narrow belt but a broad one half a continent wide.

PRINCIPLES OF REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY APPLIED TO RUSSIAN TURKESTAN

ARVED SCHULTZ. **Die natürlichen Landschaften von Russisch-Turkestan.** ix and 66 pp.; maps. (Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiet der Auslandskunde, Vol. 2.) L. Friederichsen & Co., Hamburg, 1920. 11 x 8 inches.

It is the introduction to this paper that is of chief significance. In it the author briefly reviews the principal articles dealing with the question of natural regions from Herbertson (1905) to Gradmann (1916). He then analyzes the relation between general and special regional studies and gives thirteen categories of structural facts necessary in a study of the natural regions of a country: orography, climate, genetic morphology, hydrography, dynamic morphology, agriculture, plant geography, animal geography, genetic anthropology, ethnography, demography, economics, and transportation. It is, of course, not assumed that these subjects will be developed with that fullness of detail that the specialist in these various fields would demand, nor that all of them are necessarily applicable to a given region; but rather that they should be developed where applicable in their geographical aspects. Had he stopped here the author would have laid himself open to grave criticism as being the newest addition to the long line of special pleaders who believe that they can trace geographical influences through the affairs of men without taking into account the multitude of ways in which man's course is directed independently of geographical circumstances and conditions. Such dependence upon the formula of geographical control or influence would not be objectionable if the result were labeled "suggestions." When the result is put forward as proof the effect is disastrous. For man does not react to nature alone; he reacts to life itself—to the past of his kind, to emotion, to desire, to ambition.

Each problem of man arises from a complex of forces, of which some may be geographical. These must be studied in their relationships or they have no meaning. Well does Schultz say that the ultimate object of geography is the ecology of man and his culture; and that it is a mistake to limit the study of natural regions to their physical geography without consideration of cultural regions in their anthropogeographical relationships.

The distinction made between the nucleal and marginal portions of a natural region is particularly suggestive. Often the marginal belt may be broad and marked by transitions from neighboring regions. It is the nucleus that has the distinctive features of the region. Its characterization is especially significant. Important also are the differences of environmental detail here and there, which may indeed have exceptional influence in the distribution of man and may significantly modify his life within the general framework of a region. Without attention to environmental details the whole regional treatment may prove weak or break down altogether.

After the author has laid down his principles of regional study he applies them to Russian Turkestan. The result has many praiseworthy features, especially from the pedagogical standpoint. Geographical data are conveniently and closely organized. The relation between the author's theory of regional treatment and his practice is, however, not always clear. In the chapter entitled "Bodenkundliche Gliederung von Turkestan" there does not appear to be any established connection between the physical characters of the soil and the distribution of people. Other chapters on the physical data are to less degree disconnected with the main theme, yet all suffer from a certain detached quality as if they were separate essays on as many different subjects. Doubtless they broaden the reader's background and hence have a certain value. The paper must be judged principally by Chapter 14, entitled "Die Landschaften Turkestans." Here we have the various regions grouped according to their physical character. But one looks in vain for penetrating reasons for the classification adopted. The chapter may be characterized as containing a series of dicta put into technical